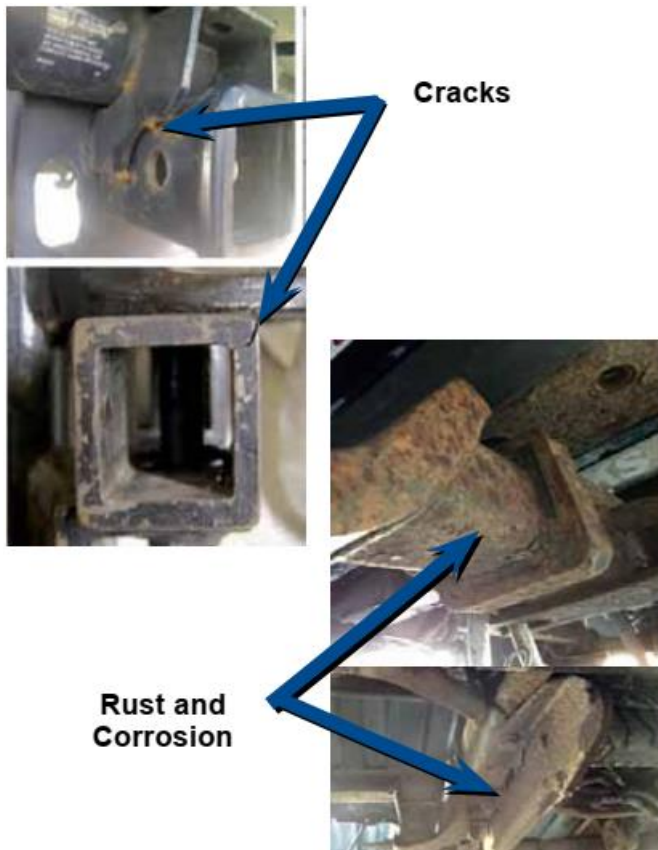


## I have a minor crack my in trailer hitch– Is It Too Bad?



I was recently reading on a forum about an Airstreamer that had a crack on his hitch ball mount.

He had been traveling for several weeks through the southwest and during his last stop, while hooking up, he just happened to notice a crack on the sides of his hitch ball mount, he was not sure if they were new or not, growing or not. The cracks appear to be to running next to the welds.

His question was can he wait until he gets home to have it checked out or should he have the hitch head welded or replaced before he travels any further? The hitch head is definitely cracked. It has been cracked for a while based on the rust and that there is no evidence that there has been any recent cracking, it all appears to be weathered the same.

The only safe answer is to have it **replaced** or professionally welded before any additional traveling.

That being said could you make it home with the cracked hitch head? Maybe, but only if there is absolutely no way to have it replaced or have it

welded. It could get you home, but you would want to keep a close eye on it while traveling.

This question brings up the point of regular inspection of the hitch components. If more people would do regular inspections of their hitch, there would be fewer accidents or hitch failures that happen every year. The trailer separating from the tow vehicle is one thing no one wants to experience.

The inspection should cover all the hitch components: on the tow vehicle, receiver, hitch ball as well as the coupler, safety chains and break away switch.

**What to inspect on the hitch:** Check the hitch mounting bolts on tow vehicle-loose or missing. Look for cracks, corrosion or signs of twisting on hitch components. Check receiver pin and clip for wear or damage. Check hitch ball for wear. Check that the hitch ball is tight and properly torqued. Check that the bolts on hitch head are tight and properly torqued (recommended torque is 300 ft. lbs. for the ¾” bolts). If you have brackets on the A-Frame that the torsion bars attach to, check that the bolts are tight. Check that the coupler latches and that it sits on the ball properly. Does the safety pin go thru the latch? Check the coupler (inside coupler) latching pawl for wear or cracks. The same inspection should be performed on motor homes as well, you are probably pulling either a small car or cargo trailer. You don't want your next trip to come off without a hitch!